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**State Agricultural Development Board Approves \$2,500,000 to  
Cumberland Farm Products**

The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board voted today to approve a \$2,500,000 grant request submitted by the Cumberland Farm Products produce marketing cooperative in Monticello. The award will go to build a modern vegetable processing facility that will do value-added marketing of vegetables for over 350 area producers.

Governor Patton praised the Board's action to boost the efforts of producers in Wayne and surrounding counties to explore alternative crops to replace lost tobacco income.

"This action means that Cumberland Farm Products will be able to better meet the needs of their customers in marketing their products this year and in the future. It also means that more producers will have another income alternative. While this money will be spent on facilities and equipment, it is an investment in an aggressive group of producers looking for income alternatives, in their agricultural diversification efforts, and in the future of agriculture in one of our state's most progressive agricultural areas," said Governor Paul Patton.

The award was made as one of eleven projects approved by the Board during its meeting today. The Board approved a total of \$4,443,000 in state level projects, including Cumberland Farm Products, and \$403,600 in a variety of county-level programs.

"Kentucky's produce industry has a tremendous amount of untapped potential," Agriculture Commissioner Billy Ray Smith said. "This funding will help area vegetable growers achieve that potential. It also will provide an economic boost to a part of the state that has suffered significant job losses in recent years."

"This is a great opportunity for farmers of south central Kentucky," said Cumberland Farm Products General Manager Larry Snell. "The Agricultural Development Board's decision to make this award will not only have an immediate benefit for producers, but will benefit Kentucky agriculture for generations to come."

Staff of the Agricultural Development Board will meet soon with the Cumberland Farm Products Board of Directors to work out the details for the proposed facility. The commitment by the Board comes at just the time the Cooperative needs to purchase the new equipment to take full advantage of the coming growing season.